

I learned that there is a regulatory item which is underway at the Federal Communications Commission which could badly damage independent ISPs. I would be willing to participate by sending online comments via the FCC website.

I learned that BellSouth has filed a petition at the FCC, asking the FCC to stop regulating broadband service. This is not good.

If this petition is granted, this would mean that the large phone companies would no longer be subject to regulatory review of their broadband pricing to independent ISPs like Sonic.net. As a result, independent ISPs like Sonic.net would have to individually negotiate pricing and the ability to interconnect, which would undoubtedly raise their prices in the long term.

The more serious threat is that it is even possible that the phone companies could, in the long run, refuse to provide the necessary connections for the DSL service, and ISPs would be unable to sell DSL at all. This would be pretty bad.

BellSouth's claim is that because their own affiliated ISP service (which is similar to SBC/Yahoo here in California) already controls a huge majority of the market, so squashing the rest of the competition isn't likely to impact the market much.

What is a demagogical bull. It is like saying to a poor person: listen, give me all of your money, this wouldn't make much difference to you -- you're already poor!

Considering that I as a customer and Sonic.net as an ISP are the folks who might get squashed, I think we all need to speak up!

While BellSouth doesn't serve California, Verizon and Qwest have followed up and filed similar requests, and we could expect SBC to follow suit. We very much value SBC and SBC-ASI as partners in providing DSL service to California consumers, but we are concerned that if they were not required to provide access to all ISPs, independent ISPs and Sonic.net and their customers could suffer badly.

This is not a near term threat - Sonic.net has contractual agreements with SBC which allow them to sell DSL for a long time to come - but this is a long term potential threat which requires a near-term response.

We need to tell the FCC that the companies which built the Internet itself should not be wiped away and replaced by the large telephone *monopolies*.

I am glad that the FCC is accepting comments on this petition and I would very much appreciate if they are taken into account.

Here is why I value obtaining Internet service from an independent ISP such as Sonic.net, and why BellSouth's request would badly affect consumers with regards to our available choice of Internet Service for broadband.

I like Sonic.net because it appears to be one of the few ISPs that

don't bundle their service with a stack of spyware, as opposed to big telephone providers, like Yahoo-SBC. And I like diversity.

I don't like monopolies because: 1) they drive the competitors out of competition just in order to then lower the quality of the service and rise the prices; 2) unregulated service means giving the advantage to the predatory capital; 3) everyone will suffer except for a fistful of people who would take advantage of the situation.

Thanks,
Alexander "Sasha" Glushenko
Ph.D. Appl. Math.